

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 211378
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211378

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: OAU, CG, AO

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PAGE 02 STATE 211378

SUBJECT: OAU VERIFICATION COMMISSION FOR ZAIRE/ANGOLA
BORDER

REF: A) LAGOS 9889; B) LAGOS 9374; C) LAGOS 9301; D)KHAR-
TOUM 3294; E) KIGALI 1213; F) KINSHASA 8474; G) YAOUNDE
3626; H) BRAZZAVILLE 1004

1. STATE 200867 POSED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO DEVELOP THE KIND OF BASIC DATA WASHINGTON REQUIRES IN ORDER TO DEVELOP CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR ANTICIPATED REQUESTS FOR LOGISTICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE BORDER VERIFICATION COMMISSION UNDER THE OAU AEGIS. THE ANGOLAN/ZAIRIAN AGREEMENT ON NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS OF JULY 22 MAKES PROVISION, INTER ALIA, FOR THE COMMISSION.

2. WE APPRECIATE ADDRESSEES' EFFORTS (REFTELS) PRIOR TO STATE 200867 TO KEEP WASHINGTON ABREAST OF LIKELY HOST COUNTRY ATTITUDES TOWARD FORMAL REQUESTS TO BE MEMBERS OF THE VERIFICATION COMMISSION. WHILE THIS IS AN AFRICAN MATTER AND WE HAVE MADE NO COMMITMENTS ON SUPPORT, WE HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMISSION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS AND OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE BRAZZAVILLE ACCORD.

3. WITH THIS IN MIND, WE ARE CONCERNED TO BE FULLY CURRENT ON THE COMMISSION. THERE ARE PRESENTLY A NUMBER OF CONFLICTING REPORTS AND SOME UNCERTAINTY AS TO JUST WHERE MATTERS STAND IN ITS FORMATION. THIS MESSAGE IS AN ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN CLARIFICATION.

4. FOR LAGOS: INFORMATION IN YOUR 9889 SEEMS AT VARIANCE WITH YOUR EARLIER MESSAGES ON THE SUBJECT. WE ASSUME THE FACT THAT THESE ARE BASED ON CONVERSATIONS WITH DIFFERENT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 211378

INTERLOCUTERS MAY ACCOUNT FOR THIS. AS WE UNDERSTAND CURRENT STATE OF PLAY, NIGERIA HAS BEEN APPROACHED IN SOME UNSPECIFIED, UNOFFICIAL WAY TO SERVE ON COMMISSION AND IS FAVORABLY INCLINED. IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHO MADE APPROACHES AND WHEN FORMAL INVITATION IS LIKELY TO BE FORTHCOMING. BRAZZAVILLE 1004 EARLIER INDICATED THAT NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES THEMSELVES WERE ACTIVELY SEEKING TO FIND OUT THROUGH THEIR OWN EMBASSIES WHAT THEIR ROLE IS LIKELY TO BE ON VERIFICATION COMMISSION AND THAT,

AS OF THEN, A FORMAL APPROACH HAD NOT BEEN MADE. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY RECORD OF CONVERSATION TO WHICH PARA 2 LAGOS 9889 REFERS. REFERENCE TO ITS HAVING TAKEN PLACE LAST SPRING IS PUZZLING AS VERIFICATION COMMISSION WAS NOT AGREED UPON UNTIL JULY 22. QUESTION OF POSSIBLE U.S. SUPPORT IN CONNECTION WITH THE RE-OPENING OF THE BENGUELA RAILROAD WAS DISCUSSED WHEN THE SECRETARY MET WITH GARBA AT NEW YORK ON JULY 26. COULD THIS BE WHAT DEDE HAD IN MIND? OR COULD DEDE HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO GARBA'S MARCH 21 1977 REPEAT 1977 CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON IN WHICH, INTER ALIA, THE POSSIBILITY WAS BROACHED OF A QUOTE BORDER-POLICE

TYPE OF OPERATION PUT TOGETHER BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES UNQUOTE? HOWEVER, IN THAT MEMCON NO MENTION IS MADE OF POSSIBLE U.S. ASSISTANCE WITH SUCH AN OPERATION.

5. FOR KHARTOUM AND ADDIS: WE ARE NOT CLEAR AS TO WHAT ROLE THE OAU IS PLAYING. FOR EXAMPLE, KHARTOUM 3294 STATED THAT DETAILS OF MODALITIES OF AN OAU-SPONSORED VERIFICATION COMMISSION HAD NOT YET BEEN DECIDED. IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO KNOW IF THERE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THEN. ALSO, HAS THE OAU APPROACHED SUDANESE GOVERNMENT ON BEING A MEMBER, AND IF SO WHAT WAS ITS RESPONSE? WHAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN OR ARE BEING APPROACHED?

6. FOR KINSHASA AND NAIROBI: WITH RWANDA REPORTEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 211378

HAVING DECLINED, AND ANGOLA HAVING REJECTED CAE AS FOURTH MEMBER OF COMMISSION, WHAT IS STATUS OF ZAIRE'S LATEST REPORTED PROPOSAL OF KENYA WHICH WE UNDERSTAND MPLA PRE-

VIOUSLY REJECTED? WE HAVE SEEN A REPORT THAT ANGOLA WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT KENYA AS A COMMISSION MEMBER. IS THIS TRUE? ALSO, WHAT IS STATUS OF THE EIGHTEEN CHECKPOINTS (NINE ON EACH SIDE OF THE BORDER) -- IS THERE AGREEMENT ON THESE?

7. FOR YAOUNDE: SINCE YOUR 3626 REPORTING YOUR ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD THAT CAMEROON WOULD ACCEPT OVERTURE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMISSION, WE HAVE HAD NO INDICATIONS FROM YOU THAT GURC HAS BEEN APPROACHED. WOULD APPRECIATE CURRENT STATUS REPORT.

8. FOR KIGALI: DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES YOUR 1343 WHICH INDICATED THAT RWANDA MIGHT STILL ACCEPT MEMBERSHIP IN COMMISSION. EMBASSY'S VIEWS (PARA 4 KIGALI 1213) ON HOW U.S. SUPPORT MIGHT BEST BE CHanneled AND PACKAGED ARE APPRECIATED. FYI: THIS PARALLELS TO AN EXTENT SOME OF THE PRELIMINARY THINKING THAT IS CURRENTLY GOING ON IN THE DEPARTMENT ON THE QUESTION OF HOW AN ANGOLAN/ZAIRIAN MONITORING FORCE MIGHT BE ORGANIZED. END FYI.

9. SHOULD THE QUESTION ARISE OF U.S. LOGISTICAL OR OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT FOR THE VERIFICATION COMMISSION, YOU WILL WISH TO BEAR IN MIND THAT WE ARE EXAMINING POSSIBILITIES ONLY ON A CONTINGENCY BASIS.

10. WERE SUCH REQUESTS TO BE MADE OTHER THAN UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE OAU, WE WOULD PROBABLY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO RESPOND. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE CONTEXT OF SUCH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 211378

REQUESTS IN KNOWING WHETHER WE ARE LIKELY TO BE A SINGLE RECIPIENT OR WHETHER THE OAU IS THINKING OF ASKING OTHER STATES, AFRICAN OR NON-AFRICAN, TO CONTRIBUTE AND, IF SO, WHICH ONES. WE WOULD ALSO WISH TO KNOW IF THEY CONTEMPLATE MAKING REQUESTS DIRECTLY OR ADDRESSING THEM TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL WHICH IS EXPERIENCED IN HANDLING SUCH QUESTIONS, BUT WHOSE INVOLVEMENT WOULD FURTHER INTERNATIONALIZE THE QUESTION. FYI: DUE TO STATUTORY AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS WE WOULD PROBABLY PREFER REFERRING REQUESTS TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. END FYI.

11. IN SEEKING THIS INFORMATION BEAR IN MIND WE ARE ANXIOUS NOT TO BE OUT FRONT. OUR APPROACH SHOULD BE LOW-KEY, AND ROUTINE, AND SHOULD CAREFULLY AVOID ANY IMPLICATION OF PRE-JUDGMENTS AS TO HOW WE MIGHT RESPOND TO REQUESTS IN BEHALF OF THE VERIFICATION COMMISSION. VANCE

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